

Message Text

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FOR: IBS, IPS

E.O. 11652: N/A

SUBJECT: PRESS TREATMENT OF PRIME MINISTER'S DEATH

1. AN ESTIMATED 100,000 PEOPLE JAMMED TANANARIVE'S MAHAMASINA STADIUM TO PAY LAST RESPECTS TO PRIME MINISTER AND SIX OTHERS. THE DAILY MADAGASCAR MATIN REPORTED THIS FIGURE IN AUGUST 5 REPORT ON FUNERAL. PRIME MINISTER, COLONEL JOEL RAKOTOMALALA, AN ADVISOR, THE MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT, ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF, AND THREE OTHERS WERE KILLED IN A HELICOPTER ACCIDENT ON JULY 30.

2. IN HIS ADDRESS AT FUNERAL, PRESIDENT RATSIRAKA PRAISED DEDICATION OF DECEASED. STRESSED LOSS TO NATION. DAILY ALSO REPORTED HIS SAYING ABOUT DECEASED: "YOU LEAVE US WHEN THE REVOLUTION IS ONLY BEGINNING...YOU CARRIED HIGH THE TORCH OF THE REVOLUTION...WE WILL CONTINUE THE REVOLUTIONARY STRUGGLE IN YOUR HONOR AND IN HONOR TO OUR COUNTRY."

3. THE FUNERAL FOLLOWED FOUR DAYS OF PUBLIC MOURNING DURING WHICH, REPORTEDLY, THOUSANDS CROWDED THE MAHAMASINA STADIUM TO PAY HOMAGE. DAILY MADAGASCAR MATIN RAN PHOTOS AND BIOGRAPHIES OF DECEASED AND PICTURES OF HELICOTER WRECKAGE. BOLD HEADLINES EXCLAIMED: "IT WAS HORRIBLE" AND "L'HOMMAGE - O COMBIEN EMOUVANT - DE LA NATION TOUTE ENTIERE". RADIO PLAYED ORGAN AND OTHER RELIGIOUS MUSIC

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THROUGHOUT THE MOURNING PERIOD AND TELEVISION FEATURED

CHORAL GROUPS AND RELIGIOUS MUSIC WHEN NOT REPORTING
ON THE DEATHS.

4. OTHER LOCAL MALAGASY-LANGUAGE NEWSPAPERS, LIKE MADA-
GASCAR MATIN, RECOUNTED DEDICATION OF DECEASED LEADERS.
THEY ALSO SAID THAT PUBLIC TURN-OUT FOR HOMAGE INDICATED
PEOPLE'S DEDICATION TO GOVERNMENT AND REVOLUTION. LARGE
MALAGASY DAILY, MARESAKA, REFLECTED, REFERRING TO HITLER'S
LIFE, THAT PERHAPS GOOD LEADERS ARE SUPPOSED TO LIVE SHORT
LIVES, WHILE DICTATORS LIVE LONG LIVES.

5. MEANWHILE, TODAY'S MADAGASCAR MATIN HEADLINED ON FRONT
PAGE THAT LOCAL "LEADERS OF THE LEFT" AND PRESIDENT RATSIRAKA
LAUNCHED AN APPEAL FOR VIGILANCE. JOINT DECLARATION SAID
DEATHS OF "SEVEN HEROES" LEFT A HUGE VOID IN THE RANKS OF
MALAGASY REVOLUTIONARIES, A VOID WHICH THE IMPERIALISTS
AND REACTIONARIES WOULD EXPLOIT IN ORDER TO RETARD THE REVOLU-
TION: IT EXHORTED PROGRESSIVE FORCES TO CLOSE RANKS
AGAINST "DECEITFUL MANOEUVRES" (MANOEUVRES SOURNOISES) OF
IMPERIALISTS. IT URGED PEOPLE TO REMAIN VIGILANT "IN ORDER
NOT TO BE HOODWINKED BY THE LIES AND NUMEROUS TRAPS HABITUALLY
USED BY THE IMPERIALISTS...AND TO GUARANTEE THE DEVELOPMENT OF
THE REVOLUTION".

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